



The Education Trust



NCLR
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA

Barbara Cargill
Chair
Texas State Board of Education
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Chairwoman Cargill:

Texas leaders have long recognized the need for all high school graduates to have the knowledge and skills necessary for college and the careers that drive the state's economy and pay a family-supporting wage. Texas students have risen to these high expectations; every year, more students from all backgrounds graduate from high school ready for college and the workplace.

The Texas State Board of Education took an important step toward continuing this tradition late last year when, on first reading of the proposed rules for 19 TAC 74, it voted to require that students complete at least one of the rigorous mathematics courses outlined in Section 74.13(e)(2) in order to earn any of the five diploma endorsements created by H.B. 5.

Research has shown over and over again that taking a rigorous math sequence is the best preparation for success in college and for equipping students with the high-level thinking and robust skill set that today's jobs require. Long experience shows that if we don't require rigorous courses for *all* students, low-income students and students of color, unlike their peers, will most likely be sent down a lesser road.

Rigorous math is by no means everything that students need to be college and career ready. But requiring it for all endorsements is an important marker in what could otherwise become a retreat to the days when students' skin color or zip codes determined whether they were best prepared for college and the workplace or for life on the margins of society.

We urge State Board of Education members to hold the line on high expectations for all students and maintain the requirement that all students seeking an endorsement complete at least one of the rigorous courses listed in Section 74.13(e)(2).

Sincerely,

Kati Haycock
President, The Education Trust

Brent Wilkes
National Executive Director, The League
of United Latin American Citizens

Delia Pompa
Senior Vice President, Programs,
The National Council of La Raza